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RUEHGL/AMCONSUL GUAYAQUIL 4072  
RUEILB/CIA TTIC WASHINGTON DC  
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RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC  
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SUBJECT: MAJOR SENTENCED TO 40 YEARS FOR 1999 MASSACRE IN  
LA GABARRA

REF: BOGOTA 6382

¶1. On September 15, the Colombian Supreme Court found Major Luis Fernando Campuzano Vasquez guilty of complicity in the August 21, 1999 massacre of 27 people in La Gabarra, Norte de Santander. The court ruled that Campuzano, a lieutenant at the time, ordered the withdrawal of military patrols and which allowed paramilitaries of the United Self-Defense Forces of Colombia (AUC) to kill 27--without opposition from the armed forces. The Court ruled that Campuzano had advance knowledge of the AUC attack, and sentenced him to 40 years in prison.

¶2. In 1999, President Andres Pastrana relieved the then head of the 5th Brigade (General Alberto Bravo), the commander of the police in Norte de Santander (Col. Roque Sanchez), and the regional DAS Director (Almer Munoz Munoz) from duty after the massacre. Additionally, the case was passed from the military justice system to the civilian system that year. The Inspector General (Procuraduria) finished its investigation into the case in 2004, and the military then suspended Campuzano for 80 days. On October 21, 2003, Campuzano was acquitted in the First Specialized Court of Cundinamarca, and on April 28, 2005 the Superior District Court of Cundinamarca upheld the acquittal. The Prosecutor General (Fiscalia) appealed the case to the Supreme Court, which released its ruling September 15 overturning the lower court acquittals. Campuzano was immediately detained.

¶3. This is the second significant human rights case resolved in the last month with a conviction (Ref A), and a key victory for the Fiscalia in a case involving the military. Brownfield